

Grade 12 Overview

Focus: Taking Responsibility for Earning a Living

This unit for Grade 12 emphasizes that it is important for young people to develop their potential and take personal responsibility for preparing themselves to earn a living. The lessons in this unit are interdisciplinary and may be adapted for other levels and a number of subject areas, including Economics, English/Language Arts, and Career Education.

Key Ideas:

- Individuals are responsible for supporting themselves and their families.
- Individuals are responsible for developing their own human capital (skills and knowledge), both for personal satisfaction and for the good of one's family and community.
- Every individual has knowledge, skills, creativity, and interests that he or she can use in the labor force.
- First impressions created in job applications and job interviews are extremely important in getting a job.
- In order to get a job and earn a living, it is important to know what employers expect.
- Both skills (human capital) and good attitudes are important for success in a job or career.

Key Connections to Citizenship Education:

Good citizens:

- always do their personal best.
- take responsibility for earning a livelihood.
- respect themselves.
- are honest and truthful.

Lessons:

1. *My Skills Inventory*
2. *Completing a Job Application*
3. *What Employers Want*
4. *"Dear Dr. Einstein: Please submit your resume . . ."*

Culminating Activity:

Culminating activities for this unit could include a service-learning project based on students' career interests. This might allow some students to work as volunteers in a community agency or other community activity in order to explore and develop their skills. In another type of service activity, students might decide on a needed service related to jobs that they could provide. For example, students might conduct a survey or a needs assessment to explore the types of jobs available in the locality and the types of training and educational opportunities offered. They might develop recommendations for a better match between jobs and training. Another type of culminating activity might involve "shadowing" an employer or an employee in a student's job interest area. In both cases, the effectiveness of this activity could be measured by having students compare their perceptions about their job readiness before and after the activity.

Curriculum Connections:

Activities in this unit will help students to attain academic standards in:

Social Studies (Grades 9-12)

Economics - Students will:

- Students will explain the importance of labor productivity to individuals, firms, and nations by explaining how labor productivity affects income, production costs, and national standards of living.

English/Language Arts (Grades 9-12) - Students will:

- comprehend developmentally appropriate materials, including a broad variety of literature, magazines, newspapers, routine business documents, and reference materials.
- write for different purposes and audiences producing a variety of forms, including synthesis and analysis of information from a variety of sources; completion of complex forms; and procedures and directions.
- communicate orally with people of all ages by participating in interviews and formal and informal debates.

Career Education (Grades 9-12) - Students will:

- understand the relationship between educational achievement and career planning.
- understand the need for positive attitudes toward work and learning.
- demonstrate the skills to interact positively with others.

Source:

National Career Development Guidelines, National Occupational Information Coordinating Committee.

For complete proficiency guides in the various subject areas, contact the Office of Program Development, Indiana Department of Education, Room 229, State House, Indianapolis, Indiana, 46204-2798, telephone number 317-232-9186.

Photographs by
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Seniors from Southmont High School in Crawfordsville teach economic concepts to kindergarten students at Ladoga Elementary School, Ladoga, Indiana.



Grade 12 Lesson One

My Skills Inventory

This lesson helps students to understand that they are responsible for developing the skills and knowledge they need to compete in the labor force.

Adapted from *Choices & Changes III, Choice Making, Productivity, and Planning*, copyright © 1992, National Council on Economic Education, New York, NY 10036. Used with permission.

Curriculum Connections:

Social Studies (Economics), Career Education, English/Language Arts.

Key Ideas:

- Every individual has knowledge, skills, creativity, and interests that he or she can use in the labor force to produce goods and services.
- Individuals are responsible for developing their own human capital (skills and knowledge), which they can use to earn a livelihood.
- By specializing, individuals gain skills and knowledge that give them a comparative advantage in a specific area and enable them to compete in the labor force.

Key Connections to Citizenship Education:

Good citizens:

- always do their personal best.
- take personal responsibility for earning a livelihood.
- respect themselves.

Objectives:

Students will:

- examine the relationship of personal income to productivity.
- list skills, knowledge, creativity, and interests that make up human capital.
- demonstrate that people are responsible for developing their own set of skills and knowledge, their own human capital.
- assess their future interests in various skill areas.

Introductory Activity:

Take a quick poll of students to see how many like animals. Write down the number on the board. Then ask and write down how many like sports, arts, music, and mechanics. Ask students if they have considered getting jobs in one of these fields of interest. Ask for examples of job possibilities. Animals: pet grooming, kennel operations, veterinarian, veterinary assistant; Sports: sporting goods sales, coach, referee, physical education teacher, health club worker; Visual Art: graphic designer, photographer, photography equipment and camera sales, advertising, museum curator or exhibits designer, graphic designer; Music: sound technician, manager, theatre set designer, recording artist; Mechanics: auto repair, pilot, industrial design, airport operations. Remind students that everyone has a unique set of skills and knowledge, called human capital, which needs to be considered when seeking job opportunities.

Core Activities:

1. Ask students how income is linked to productivity. Clarify the following ideas: In general, the greater our productivity, the higher our incomes. Our productivity is directly tied to our stock of human capital. This stock can be increased through training, education, and experience on the job. We add to our stock of human capital by investing in ourselves. People born with a good singing voice must invest time and money in training and practice to turn talent into a saleable skill.
2. Ask students to complete the “My Skills Inventory” handout. Make sure they know that they may add words or skills to each category or add categories. This is an individual activity for each student’s own use. Group discussion should focus on questions volunteered by students.
3. Ask students to write down one skill that might be their comparative advantage. A comparative advantage is the economic term for a higher level of skill or talent relative to others in the labor force. People should specialize in those activities in which they have a comparative advantage.
4. Conclude the lesson by completing the handout entitled, “Skills in My Future.” Emphasize to students the importance of planning to develop future skills, so that they can earn a better livelihood.

Additional Ideas:

Students might consult business magazines to identify the skills that will be needed in the labor market in the coming decade. Students can list those skills on a chart and compare them with their personal interests.

Evaluation/Assessment:

Evaluate students on how well they complete the “Skills in My Future” handout. Students should discuss their responses, make improvements or additions, and take a copy of their best work home to share with parents.

Home Connection:

Students might ask family members what skills they consider to be the student’s comparative advantage. Invite parents and other community members to visit the class and discuss how they developed their own special skills and interests.

Resources:

- Handout: “My Skills Inventory”
- Handout: “Skills in My Future”

My Skills Inventory

Skills, knowledge, interests, and creativity are unique to each individual. They come in many different forms and comprise an individual's human capital.

Circle the skills and activities that interest you. You may add words or skills to each category or add more categories. Skip categories that do not interest you. This inventory is for your own use.

VERBAL (language):

persuading, planning, problem-solving, motivating, advising, decision-making, supervising, selling, managing, negotiating, interviewing, writing, broadcasting.

HUMANITARIAN:

health care, teaching, training, counseling, child care

SELLING:

speaking, explaining, demonstrating, promoting, advertising

MECHANICAL:

drafting, reading blueprints, recording sounds, repairing, using tools, driving, piloting

ANIMAL CARE:

grooming, kennel management, veterinary assisting, pet sitting

PROTECTIVE:

law enforcing, fire fighting, investigating, security guarding

ARTISTIC:

making music, designing, drawing, painting, photographing, acting, composing, dancing, performing, singing, teaching, story telling, writing, interviewing

PHYSICAL PERFORMANCE:

swimming, gymnastics, football, basketball, running, coaching

SCIENTIFIC:

diagnosing, observing, problem-solving, doing mathematics, experimenting, gathering information, investigating, analyzing

Handout

Skills in My Future

NAME

1. MY MAJOR INTERESTS ARE:

2. IN THE FUTURE, I WANT TO PRODUCE THESE GOODS OR SERVICES:

3. THE SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE I WILL NEED TO DO THIS ARE:

4. I WOULD LIKE TO DEVELOP THESE SKILLS OR TALENTS AS MY COMPARATIVE ADVANTAGE:

5. THE TYPE OF EDUCATION OR TRAINING I NEED TO DEVELOP MY SKILLS INCLUDES:



Grade 12 Lesson Two

Completing a Job Application

This lesson focuses on the importance of making a good first impression and doing one's best in completing a job application.

Adapted from *Choices & Changes III, Choice Making, Productivity, and Planning*, copyright © 1992, National Council on Economic Education, New York, NY 10036. Used with permission.

Curriculum Connections:

Social Studies (Economics), Career Education.

Key Ideas:

- Completing a job application accurately and completely is the first step in getting a job.
- The first impression a person makes on an employer is through the job application.

Key Connections to Citizenship Education:

Good citizens:

- always do their personal best.
- take personal responsibility for earning a livelihood.
- respect themselves.
- are honest and truthful.

Objectives:

Students will:

- learn how to complete a job application.
- learn the importance of completing a job application carefully, accurately, and honestly.

Introductory Activity:

Have two students present the problems in the handout entitled, "Dilemmas". A dilemma is a problem that has more than one attractive solution or that seems to have no solutions. After each dilemma, ask the class to consider: What are the economic benefits and costs of each choice? What else do we need to know about future opportunities in each job? What considerations, other than economic, might influence decision-making? Have the class vote on their preferred choice for each dilemma and give reasons for their vote.

Core Activities:

1. Ask students how many have ever filled out a job application. Explain that they probably will have to fill out an application for any type of job they are interested in. Give each student a copy of the handout Application for Employment.
2. Review the information applicants need to have with them to fill out the application: Social Security number; names, addresses and phone numbers of references; and names, addresses and phone numbers of former employers. Emphasize the importance of references and discuss who might serve as a good reference. References might include teachers, clergy, or volunteer leaders. Relatives probably should not be listed.
3. Ask students to pay special attention to the last statement on the application, which begins, "I certify that the statements made on this application are true." What is the significance of the applicant's signature? Why is truthfulness in completing the application important?
4. Have students complete the form with a pen. Emphasize that neatness and accuracy are very important, and that employers won't waste time with applications they can't read.
5. After students have completed the application, discuss questions or problems they had in the process of answering all the questions on the application.
6. Urge students to keep this application and update information as needed to take with them when they apply for a job.

Additional Ideas:

1. Write letters to the personnel departments of several local businesses asking for copies of employment applications. When several have arrived, compare similarities and differences.
2. Write additional job dilemmas similar to those discussed at the beginning of the lesson.
3. Invite a personnel director of a business to visit the classroom and discuss qualities he or she looks for in a job applicant.

Evaluation/Assessment:

Assess the job application skills of students by having them fill out a similar application that they have not seen before.

Home Connections:

Students might ask family members who are employed to bring home a blank application from their place of employment to compare with the one completed in this lesson. Family members might share their experiences in filling out the application when they got a job there: How long did it take? How many references were required? Did the employer call the references?

Resources:

Handouts: Dilemmas and Application for Employment.

DILEMMAS

1. I am eighteen years old, and I've just graduated from high school. Fortunately, I've got an interesting problem. I've been offered two jobs. One is in a steel mill and the starting pay is great . . . \$7 an hour! The other job I've been offered is an assistant manager's position at a local fast-food restaurant. The starting pay is about \$5 an hour and working conditions are good. There are good opportunities to advance to higher management positions. Which job should I accept?
2. I just finished high school, and I'm interested in computers. I don't have money for technical school, but I do qualify for admission into the U.S. Air Force. In the military, I may be able to get some computer training and get financial assistance to attend technical school or college after I finish my enlistment. On the other hand, military service plus college or technical school means I will not earn much money for several years. The local shirt factory also is now hiring workers at a starting salary of \$7 an hour. What should I do?

Handout

APPLICATION FOR EMPLOYMENT

Name

Date

Position desired

Street Address

City

State

Zip

Phone

Social Security Number

EMPLOYMENT EXPERIENCE

Name and Address of Present or Last Employer

Type of business _____

Your supervisor _____ Phone _____

Title of your position and duties _____

Reason for leaving _____

EDUCATION

Institution Name and Location

Years Attended _____ Major Studies _____

Diploma or Degree _____ High School _____

Other _____

Additional training _____

What are your qualifications for the position desired? _____

REFERENCES

List two personal references other than relatives and former employers.

- | | Name | Address | Phone |
|----|------|---------|-------|
| 1. | | | |
| 2. | | | |

I certify that the statements made on this application are true. I understand that any false or misleading statement I have made will be grounds for termination of my employment.

Applicant's signature

Date

Grade 12 Lesson Three

What Employers Want

This lesson helps students understand what employers expect of prospective employees and emphasizes that students are responsible for doing their personal best in a job interview and on the job.

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Curriculum Connections:

Social Studies (Economics), English/Language Arts, Career Education.

Key Ideas:

- Knowing what employers want is important in order to get a job and earn a livelihood.
- The qualities people present in an interview can work for or against them.

Key Connections to Citizenship Education:

Good citizens:

- always do one's personal best.
- take personal responsibility to earn a livelihood.
- respect one's self.

Objectives:

Students will:

- identify the qualities that are likely to influence an employer's decision in hiring employees.
- list qualities that can work for or against them in an interview.
- demonstrate good personal presentation skills, including listening and speaking skills, in a practice job interview.

Introductory Activity:

Begin the lesson by asking, “What are the characteristics of someone you admire?” List answers on the board. Then make a second list of answers to a second question: “What are the characteristics of someone you would hire to work for you?” Discuss the comparison of these two lists.

Core Activities:

1. Lead the class in a discussion of making a good first impression. Discuss what is meant by the saying, “You never get a second chance to make a first impression.”
2. Ask students to discuss whether it is fair to judge people on first impressions. Ask if there are circumstances in which people don’t get a chance to change a first impression. Introduce the idea that a job interview is one of these circumstances. It may be the only opportunity to meet with an employer, so the first impression in this case is extremely important.
3. Explain that this lesson focuses on the qualities that are important in obtaining a job. Distribute the attached reading entitled “What Employers Want.” Have students read it silently or orally. Then ask students what qualities are important to the employer. List them on the board.
4. Ask students to add additional qualities to the list that they think might be important. (According to a survey of personnel managers, a major reason for not hiring a person is an applicant acting as if he or she doesn’t care about getting the job.)
5. Next, call on two students to practice a job interview, using the attached job interview scenarios. In the first scenario, the applicant behaves in ways that would probably discourage employment. In the second, the applicant behaves in ways that would encourage employment. Ask for students to make observations about the practice interviews.

Additional Ideas:

Ask students to write additional scenarios for successful job interviews. Have them exchange scenarios with a partner for clarification and editing. Then choose other class members to practice the interview for the class.

Evaluation/Assessment:

Based on the core activities, work with the entire class to develop a list of “tips” or criteria for a successful job interview. (Tips such as “Arrive on time;” “Wear clean clothes;” and “Be polite.” will probably be listed.) Working in pairs, each student will practice interviewing for a job, such as the one described in Scenario 2. Students will be evaluated based on their use of the tips developed by the class.

Home Connections:

Invite local employers to visit the class to discuss the qualities they seek in prospective employees. Students also might ask family members to share job interview experiences they have had and collect a list of their best tips for interview success.

Resources:

- Handouts: “What Employers Want” and “Job Interview Practice”

WHAT EMPLOYERS WANT

This reading is an actual interview with an employer about the kinds of things employers look for in job applicants. The reading reflects what most employers want from employees. You will note that the employer does not say anything about the business he or she is in.

- Q. When a young person comes to interview for a job, what is the first thing you look for?
- A. I look to see if the person has clean clothes, has bothered to try to look decent, and appears interested in the job.
- Q. Why?
- A. I know from experience that people who really want to work get themselves together for a first interview. No matter what others say, the first impression is very important.
- Q. What else do you look for?
- A. All our prospective employees must fill out a job application. The job application tells us a lot about candidates for a job.
- Q. For example?
- A. It tells us whether they can write, whether they can pay attention to detail, and if they care whether they get the job.
- Q. Don't you look at education and experience?
- A. Yes, but most of our beginning employees have very little experience and may have just graduated from high school. So we need to look at how well they completed their job application.
- Q. If you hire someone, what do you look for then?
- A. I like your question. We look for all the detail things - coming to work on time, dressing neatly, being courteous, doing assigned tasks.
- Q. Certainly there are some other things.
- A. Yes, of course. I like new employees to ask questions, rather than telling us what to do after they have only been on the job a short time. I like people who see things that need doing and go ahead and do them. I like employees who really try to find out what we are trying to accomplish.
- Q. Do you think other employers feel the same way?
- A. I know they do. Several of us get together each month or so. We share ideas. Sometimes we talk about employees who are very good and whom we can't promote. Maybe someone will have a position for them that is better than what we can now offer. We all basically have the same views.
- Q. If you had any advice to give to young employees, what would you say?
- A. I have what I call the ABCs of employment-Attention, Betterment, Caring. Does the person pay attention to what the business wants? Is the individual willing to better himself or herself? Does he or she care about the work? Although these aren't the only keys to what employers want, I believe most people can become successful if they work on these ABCs.

Handout

JOB INTERVIEW PRACTICE

Situation

The employer is the manager of a grocery store interviewing an applicant for a part time carry-out job. In both scenarios, the employer describes the duties, hours, and pay. The employer also asks the applicant why he or she wants the job and inquires about other work experiences.

Scenario 1

The applicant is dressed sloppily: untied shoes, mussed hair, wrinkled clothes. The applicant may interrupt the employer, fidget, chew gum, and insult the employer by recounting a story about once being overcharged by a clerk in the store.

Scenario 2

The applicant is neatly dressed, listens attentively, practices good manners, and gives the employer assurance that he or she is eager to get the job and would be a valuable employee.

Grade 12 Lesson Four

“Dear Dr. Einstein: Please submit your résumé . . .”

This lesson uses biographies and biographical sketches to help students learn that both skills and attitudes are important for success in work.

Curriculum Connections:

English/Language Arts, Social Studies (Economics), Career Education.

Key Ideas:

- Individuals are responsible for supporting themselves and their families.
- Both skills (human capital) and good attitudes are important for success in a job or career.
- Each individual has the responsibility for developing his or her potential, both for personal satisfaction and for the good of one’s family and community.

Key Connections to Citizenship Education:

Good citizens:

- always do their personal best.
- take personal responsibility for earning a living.
- respect themselves.

Objectives:

Students will:

- identify an individual who has achieved recognition in his or her work.
- use at least one source of biographical information to research the experiences, education, and accomplishments of the individuals they have selected.
- prepare a résumé for the persons they have researched.

Introductory Activity:

1. Introduce the lesson with a “People Search” activity in which students match famous people with a specific skill, quality, or accomplishment. (See handout.)
2. Review the purpose and format of a job résumé. The résumé summarizes a person’s educational and work experiences and highlights important skills, qualities, and achievements.

Core Activities:

1. Students should use the school media center to research a person in a specific type of work. Newspaper or magazine profiles of individuals might be used, as well as biographies. (You may wish to require that no current entertainment or sports stars be selected.) The individuals chosen need not be famous people, but there must be enough information available to carry out research for the lesson. Students might start out by identifying an area of interest, such as business, science, or music and then identify a person who has made important contributions.
2. After researching the bibliographical material, students will work in pairs explaining to each other the educational experiences and personal qualities that make their chosen individuals successful in their work. As a result of this discussion, students should be able to list these experiences and qualities.
3. Working individually, students will use the lists they have developed and a standard format to create a résumé summarizing the skills, experiences, and talents of their biographical figure. Students should list the biographical sources that they used to develop the resume.

Additional Ideas:

1. Students might work in pairs to develop a set of job interview questions for a specific job. (Job titles might be identified from the want ads in a local newspaper.) Students could then take turns playing the role of the interviewer and the individuals featured in the biographies as they interview for the job. Students should emphasize their special skills, experiences, and accomplishments.
2. Students might work in teams to develop and carry out a survey of adults regarding the type of skills, experience, and qualities they need to do their work. Each team should report its findings to the class.
3. Working individually or in teams, students might interview local employers regarding the type of skills and attitudes they seek in employees.

Home Connection:

Invite parents and other adults in the community to visit the class for a discussion of the skills and attitudes that are important in their own work.

Evaluation/Assessment:

Evaluate students on the basis of the written résumé they develop and on their participation in classroom activities, including research, discussion, and group work.

Resources:

- Handout: “People Search”
- Biographical Dictionaries; *Who’s Who in America*
- Biographical magazines such as *Current Biography* and *Biography Today*
- Encyclopedias; CD-ROM; Electronic data base
- Newspapers and popular magazines.
- Key to People Search:

KEY: 1) Jesse Owens, 2) Neil Armstrong, 3) Helen Keller, 4) Jonas Salk, 5) Harriet Tubman, 6) Mary Cassatt, 7) Clara Barton, 8) James Madison, 9) Langston Hughes.

Handout

PEOPLE SEARCH

Work in teams of three or four to match the individuals listed below with their skills, special qualities, or accomplishments. There are more names than you need. You may have to consult an encyclopedia or other reference books.

THOMAS EDISON
MARY CASSATT
JESSE OWENS
ANDREW CARNEGIE
NEIL ARMSTRONG
HELEN KELLER
CLARA BARTON
HARRIET TUBMAN
LANGSTON HUGHES
JONAS SALK
JAMES MADISON

1. _____ defied Hitler by competing in the 1936 Olympics in Berlin, Germany.
2. _____ was the first person to walk on the moon.
3. _____ overcame deafness and blindness.
4. _____ conducted research for several years to develop a vaccine, which prevents polio.
5. _____ helped others to gain their freedom at great personal risk.
6. _____ excelled as an impressionist painter in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.
7. _____ used both organizational skills and powers of persuasion to establish the American Red Cross.
8. _____ overcame illness as a young person and went on to help draft the United States Constitution.
9. _____ was an author of all types of literature and was best known for poems reflecting the African-American experience.